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NEWSFLASH

Electronic Signatures in E-filed Cases

Arizona Civil Rule of Procedure 11 requires a signature on "every pleading, motion, and other paper." Accommodations must be made when there is no paper to sign, such as electronic filings. In e-filings, signatures are often a combination of actions.

Attorneys are required to register a user name and password to electronically file in Maricopa County Superior Court. Administrative Order 2005-091 states, "[t]he use of the user name and password of an attorney or party shall constitute an original signature pursuant to Ariz. R. Civ. P. 11, where required, on electronically filed documents. The user name when used in conjunction with the personally selected password shall constitute a signature of the registered user on documents submitted to the Court or by the Court. To ensure the intent of the filing participant, the signature line on an electronically filed document will bear the printed name of the filing participant preceded by the symbol "/s/"."

Currently, one-third of all e-filers submit their pleadings to the Clerk without first entering the filing attorney's "block s" printed name/e-signature referenced in the Administrative Order. Careful attention to this will reduce the number of rejected filings and promotes compliance with Rule 11 regarding signing pleadings.